

Preliminary Editorial Report on Haliburton's Works

Nov. 22-15

In accordance with your instructions of September 29th I have gone through all the volumes mentioned, I have made numerous notes and have read with especial care "The Old Judge" and "The Clockmaker".

After several weeks of continuous examination I submit the following conclusions.

I think that a natural distinction can be made between Haliburton the humorist and satirist, and Haliburton the political historian. His works fall into these two broad divisions. In the first may be placed

The Old Judge

The Clockmaker

The Attaché

Sam Slick's Wise Saws and Modern Instances

Nature and Human Nature

The Letter Bag of the Great Western

The Season Ticket

The Second would include

The Bubbles of Canada

The English in America

Nova Scotia

~~I would recommend that the popular edition be limited to the works included in the first group,~~

It is true that these ^{works in the 1st group} contain much political and historical matter; and large portions of such matter are so interwoven with the narrative that they cannot be cut without serious damage to the whole work, ~~and~~ ~~but there are~~ but they are primarily imaginary creations & contain the bulk of Haliburton's permanently valuable work. I would recommend that the popular edition be limited to the 1st group. The collection I suggest would consist of 7 distinct works, of these 3

Nature + Human Nature.

On the whole, the book is very & tolerant, though it is not
- Typographical arrangement very careless, apostrophes lacking +
paraphrasing capricious & illogical, spelling not uniform.
Great care must be taken in setting the conversational stories, in order
to keep the various narrators clear in the reader's mind. Much of
the effect is lost by the present confused state of the text. I have
noted the features that require to be brought into harmony with the
arrangement of the other volumes of the series. The ^{is more} dialect, ^{but} as in
the previous works, ^{it is} frequently is careless & inconsistent. It includes
Yankee, Highland Scotch, ~~San~~ Coderney English, & Acadian French. I
have tried to put into more consistent character, wherever it is poss-
ible to do so without entirely re-writing ^{these} passages.
- This book maintains the interest of Wise Saws, so far as character
is concerned. ~~There is perhaps less action & fewer stories than~~
~~it.~~ If perhaps it has less action & incident & contains fewer stories
it includes ~~several~~ more ~~descriptive~~ ~~matter of a~~ sketches descriptive
of life & ~~the~~ manners. In this respect it resembles more nearly
"The Old Judge"; some of the sketches of pioneer life, & garrison life
society in Halifax & in the American cities are admirable pictures
of the time. There is not ^{too} much political comment: chapters 18 & 19
& 25 contain some long passages of this kind which are mainly dull
repetitions & should be cut out. ~~Chapter 18~~ ~~might be omitted~~ ~~entirely~~ ~~to the advantage~~
of chapter 18 might be omitted entirely, ~~and~~ ~~to the advantage~~
of the book's interest. Chapter 19 is also, in the main, is prosy and
somewhat obsolete or hackneyed in its ideas to the general reader,
but it deals with problems ~~that~~ of the relations of the ^{the} colonies and
the empire that are still live topics, and presents them with consider-
able clearness & force, it may be well to retain ~~it~~ it with the
exception of a few passages which I have marked. Chapter 25 is
rather padded, and I have cut out some paragraphs dealing with
ecclesiastical & religious controversy that have ~~no~~ little or no
interest today. It also includes a good conservative ~~partisan~~
confession of faith and some partisan ~~but~~ ~~7~~ hard hitting at
liberalism + reform; but these are so characteristically Halifaxian
& ~~more~~ amusing in their old fashioned vehemence & intolerance
that I think they will give no offence & I have consequently
retained them. ^{Few} ~~few~~ ~~articles~~ ~~will~~ ~~be~~ ~~required~~

On the whole, the book is kindly & tolerant, though it is not lacking in those satirical touches ~~that~~ in which Halibuton excels. It is the last of the Sam Slick series, and the departure of the Clockmaker is abrupt and unsatisfactory; ~~to~~ the author drops him hurriedly, and conveys the impression that ~~he~~ possibly he may have meditated a sequel; but he is in character to the ~~last~~ ^{end} & ~~there~~ he appears to me to be ^{as much} as alive and as interesting as in The Clockmaker.